Patents are granted under the sovereign prerogative of countries according to their respective Patent Laws and have territorial effect, that is, they are effective only in the country of grant. Any applicant (individual or company) is free to seek a patent in any country to protect and pursue its interests. However, as and when information is received about patents being obtained on certain items which are not considered patentable and which affect Indian interests, steps are taken to assess whether the grant of such patent can be challenged under the patent laws of the country concerned.

In order to protect bio-resources, the Patents (Second Amendment) Bill, 1999, contains provisions for mandatory disclosure of source and geographical origin of the biological material used in the invention while applying for patents in India. Provisions have also been incorporated to include the non-disclosure or wrongful disclosure of the same as grounds for opposition and for revocation of the patent, if granted. Provisions in this regard are contained in clauses 8, 17 and 28 of the said Bill.

In order to protect traditional knowledge from being patented, provisions have been incorporated in the Patents (Second Amendment) Bill, 1999, to include anticipation by available local knowledge, including oral knowledge, as one of the grounds for opposition as also for revocation of patent. Provisions in this regard are contained in clauses 17 and 28 of the said Bill.

Apart from this, Government has also initiated an exercise to develop a digital data base of traditional knowledge in the field of medicinal plants to avoid patenting of such knowledge.

Expansion of Indo-US Trade

2463. SHRI ANANTA SETHI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have prepared an action plan for the expansion of Indo-US trade;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the terms and reference of the action plan; and

(d) the various steps taken for boosting Indo-U.S. trade?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (d). The Government of India has a plan for promotion of Indo-US trade. The Plan outlines the strategy for promoting India's exports to USA in general, and identifies products with good exports potential.

Through targeting these sectors, the plan strives to exploit the untapped potential in bilateral trade. It also focuses on special efforts towards developing new and fast growing areas of cooperation, such as information technology and biotechnology. It lays emphasis on promoting exports through participation in major trade shows and specific trade promotion events, apart from streamlining the information and data base of the Indian Embassy in USA to enable it to respond to trade enquiries in a timely and effective mannner. The Action Plan also incorporates close monitoring of, as well as liaison with the US authorities on, important bilateral trade related issues.

To further buttress these efforts, the two sides have agreed to set up India-US Commercial Dialogue, which was signed on 23-3-2000. The framework aims to (a) facilitate trade (b) maximise investment opportunities across a broad rang of economic sectors, including information technology, infrastructure, biotechnology, and services.

Industrial Production

2464. SHRI JIBON ROY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that industrial production, though showing indication of revival, the production in capital goods items has not grown in the year 1999-2000; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) : (a) and (b) According to the use based classification of the Index of Industrial Production, the growth rates of different sectors of industry for the period between 1995-96 (April—February) to 1999-2000 (April—February) are given in the table below :—

SECTOR–WISE GROWTH RATE (%)

Period	BASIC GOODS	CAPITAL GOODS	INTERMEDIATE GOODS	CONSUMER GOODS	OVERALL
1995-96	10.7	5.8	19.0	11.9	12.7
1996-97	3.1	10.0	8.3	5.7	5.8
1997-98	6.8	6.4	8.3	5.8	6.9
1998-99	1.5	11.9	5.8	2.2	3.8
1999-2000	5.3	5.4	14.0	5.6	7.9